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For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

OF THE EMPHYSALGIA, OR GENTEEL-ACHE.*

THE ancients had certain maladies among them which now no longer make their appearance, and many have sprung up among us of which they had no idea. New diseases seem to arise with new generations, with them to increase and run their course, till at last they become extinct, either through the constant attention of medical skill, or from having exhausted their malignity on all the matter that could receive them.

Diseases also assume new forms, and symptoms now appear so different from what they did of old, that were we not extremely careful in observing every circumstance, the greatest mistakes would ensue.

In an extensive practice I have frequently had the most convincing proofs of the truth of the above observations in many instances, but in none more evidently than in that of the disorder of which I now lay some account before the public.

This malady, though very malignant, has not as yet been treated of by any medical pen, the task therefore of finding it a proper denomination devolves on me; many have presented themselves, but of all I most prefer that of *Emphysalgia* or *Genteel ache*.

The *emphysalgia* assumes different forms according to the age, and particularly the sex of the afflicted; it also exhibits particular symptoms according to the season of the year, all of which shall be noted in their proper place; some appearances are however universal, and those I shall take notice of in the first place.

The disease generally commences with an elevation of the sternum, a swelling or puffing up of the thorax or breast (whence its name is taken) and a proportional depression of the abdomen or belly; and hence the

old proverb of "high breast and empty stomach," seems to have derived its origin. There is sometimes also observed an *elevatio palpebri*, or raising of the eye-brow, but this is not always the case. This new arrangement of the viscera, or internal of the body, produces a constrained breathing, *dyspnea*, which occasions a determination of the blood towards the head, the veins of the neck become swelled, and the fine ramifications of the eye appear turgid; and hence the *oculus sanguineus*, or crimson eye, which is always a symptom of advanced disorder.

The afflicted now grow restless, and experience a propensity to herd with those who have the same disorder—it is generally in vain to attempt to restrain them in this; though the disorder always increases from communication, and a very malignant symptom, the *mimesis*, or desire of imitating whatever the others do, is universally the consequence.

The next stage of the disease is attended with a loathing of all those who are not disordered: this symptom is sometimes very violent; on a person in health, approaching one of those who is ill, you instantly see marks of aversion, and an exhibition of all the bad appearances of the disorder—first, the *elevatio palpebri*, is manifest; next, the *corrugatio nasi*, or curling of the nose ensues,—lastly, a violent effort to escape, at least to another part of the room.

After this, a tetanus generally comes on; the muscles of the back grow very stiff, and those of the neck acquire an intense rigidity, particularly in the male sex.

As the disorder advances the memory becomes sensibly impaired; the poor sufferers forget their former acquaintance, and will not show the least signs of recollection of them, unless they are equally sick as themselves, when they are always instantly recognized.

The eye is generally affected in this complaint, and the sight suffers a strange change: all people appear of a much smaller size to the patients than they really are; and they sometimes fancy they could stride over them, as Gulliver thought he

* This paper once before appeared in an ephemeral publication, and is now inserted in the B.M.M. by desire of the author, being more proper for this work, than for that in which it was first placed.

could over the sailors when he returned from Brobdignag.

A species of derangement always closes the disorder, of the same kind as that which makes lunatics fancy themselves kings, queens, or emperors. The patients generally think themselves at least the greatest persons of their own families, if not of the neighbourhood; and will always act accordingly; giving their orders around with all the airs of nobility; and frequently their very parents do not escape from imperious commands.

In the summer a particular symptom generally comes on; this is the hydromania, or passion for getting near water, particularly of the sea: under its influence the patients become quite outrageous if not suffered to depart, when they instantly set off to whatever shore is most frequented by those in the same complaint, plunge into the waves, and are immediately calmed.

In the winter the polimania, or desire of living in a great city, attacks most patients; in this, nearly the same effects are produced as in the hydromania; and in like manner they always experience ease on being gratified.

The patients are in general harmless, so that there is no necessity to confine them. I have not observed that the digestion is much affected by the complaint. A loss of appetite however, frequently accompanies it, and the pulse is always high.

This is the general course of the disease in most patients of both sexes: but there are besides very marked differences in its effects on each sex in particular.

In the male it is attended with a strong sensation of cold in the extremities of the legs and feet, and particularly in the neck. This he strives to remedy by excessive clothing, covering his legs with long cloth breeches to his heels, and putting over them enormous boots: while he endeavours to warm his chilly throat with immense folds of muslin: the cold sometimes proceeds into the chin, which in this case he endeavours to cover also; I have known

one patient in whom it extended up to his very nose, and who constantly covered his throat, chin, and mouth with a great quantity of the same Indian fabric, farther fortified with a piece of quilted silk, stuffed with cotton. Country patients are also very liable to the hippomania and cynomania, or passion for horses and dogs, both very inveterate symptoms and hard to be removed.

In the female on the contrary, a sensation of violent heat is at present the most apparent symptom: notwithstanding all the elder ladies of a family can do to prevent it, a young female afflicted with this complaint, even in the midst of winter, finds the internal heat so insufferable, that she throws off every article of clothing the law will permit (which prohibits people from appearing entirely naked in this country.) The breast is particularly affected with this sensation, and this part no remonstrance can induce her to put any covering on whatsoever, particularly when she is in company with those equally ill, at which times I have always observed the disorder is most violent. An old lady has assured me, that her daughter, who has been long sick, more than once practised going entirely naked in her own apartment; and that there have been many reasons to believe that some, in the last stage of the complaint, have it in contemplation to appear in public, in the same trim.

I have been informed by an ancient medical friend, that when he began practice, the symptoms of the disorder were very different; that though the ladies then experienced the same heat in the breast, yet that it was confined to that part, and on the contrary other parts of the body seemed to suffer great cold, particularly the lower regions, which they then covered with great masses of clothing; that a species of a morbid sensibility and soreness of the hips, was very universal, and that they wore a kind of apparatus over them that extended to a great distance all around, to prevent any thing from touching them, and to keep their clothes from rubbing on the

tender place: he also informed me that the complaint was of a much more malignant nature in his time in this sex; that it was attended with a loss of appetite, great debility, and frequent fainting fits, and that many almost lost the use of their limbs and never walked unless across a room, and then supported by one or two gentlemen; and that in the male sex, a great heat was then predominant all over the body, in consequence of which, men wore their coats and hats extremely small, their breeches very short, and the thinnest stockings they could procure, and their waistcoats open to the last button to keep the breast and abdomen cool; all which circumstances made me of opinion that the complaint is something of an agueish nature, and has its hot and cold fits alternately, though at much longer intervals, and for a greater continuance than any other disorder of this kind, with which we are as yet acquainted.

The symptomatology having been thus given at length, together with the diagnosis and prognosis of the disorder, we should now proceed to the ratio medendi, or cure; but being always of opinion that this is better conveyed by instances, than positive precept, I shall give the cases of a male and female patient whom I lately attended:

Case of Owen Clodpole.

June 14, 1809....My neighbour, farmer Clodpole came for me to visit his son, who, he said was very far gone in the complaint. I found the young man very ill, indeed: the elevation sterna was very apparent, together with the oculus sanguineus, the loathing of those free from the disorder and the love of those afflicted with it. The mimesis was also quite confirmed, and he already had approached that state of the disorder in which the imagination is affected, and the patients fancy themselves of superior quality: he had moreover, frequent attacks of the cynomania and hypomania, and the hydromania too had already made its appearance; his extremities were quite chilled, his legs were folded in thick pantaloons, which were again covered with enormous

boots, and an immense roll of muslin (apparently) enveloped his neck, chin, and mouth, up to his nose. The tetanus or rigidity of muscle was very violent in his back and neck; altogether forming a mass of symptoms I had seldom witnessed in so young a patient at once, for he was then but 18. I immediately ordered him a course of stimulant medicines to remove the want of irritability, or tendency to paralysis, in the system. I desired that all the infected part of his clothing might be taken away and carefully locked up from him, particularly the boots and neck stuffing; and that his back might be well rubbed night and morning, to relieve the tetanus: I also recommended the farmer to put his son to some kind of work without delay, which I had often found of great service where the imagination began to be affected. In four days after, I called again, and to my great surprize, found the young man holding the plough in one of his father's fields, and to all appearance quite recovered. The old farmer came immediately to thank me for the wonderful cure; and told me that the son greatly resisting all I had ordered, they were obliged to wait till he was asleep, to remove the infected clothing; that he then persisted obstinately to lie in bed, and would wear no other, and positively refused to do any work; and that therefore, as I had desired his back might be well rubbed to remove the stiffness, he thought the best instrument would be his horse-whip, which was administered as he said pretty tightly, and with the desired effect. It was to this last alteration by the farmer, in the mode of the prescription, that the suddenness of the cure, no doubt, is to be attributed. Dismissed cured.

Case of Miss Arabella Apeine.

The next remarkable case to which I was called in, was that of Miss Arabella Apeine, aged 19, one of the daughters of a worthy widow lady, about a mile from the farmer's, and the favourite. It was now the middle of winter, and the frost had set in rather severe, nevertheless I found Miss without any clothing but a thin muslin dress; her mother assured me

she had a petticoat too, but this appeared rather doubtful, and I really believe she had no shift on, having discovered no sign of one, after the most exact examination decency would permit; her breast was also entirely bare. She was severely afflicted with the horror of the well, and the love of the ill of this disorder. The mimesis was very strong; her memory too had suffered much, having lost all recollection of several misses in the neighbourhood, with whom she had once been very intimate. Her imagination was greatly affected; she seemed to think every one in the house her servants, and ordered her sisters and her mother on her errands at a strange rate. She had a severe hydromania in the last summer, and the polymania had now attacked her very violently, and was every day gaining ground. Her eye had also got the change before mentioned, as it was evident most who came near her seemed to her only pigmies — When I came into the room, I appeared so very little to her, that it was some time before she noticed me, but when she did, she had so strong a fit of the *elevatio palpebræ*, and the *corrugatio nasi*, that I thought it best to retire: on consideration, I judged it more prudent to alter my dress a little to her fancy; I therefore sent to borrow young Clodpole's great boots, and cravat from the farmer; I put them on, and was then received most graciously. I soon found out the whole extent of the complaint after a little conversation with Miss and her mother, and discovered she had been infected, with many others, by a young lady from Dublin, about ten months before, and that all the before mentioned symptoms had gradually appeared afterwards.

I put her immediately under a cooling regimen, and course of physic, and in order to restore her imagination, devised the following plan: the first night she went to a lazaretto, or meeting of the sick, happened to be very snowy: it was so con-

trived on her return that she should be kept under the snow, until she was entirely chilled; she was then put to bed, and her dress, if such it could be called, taken away, and a proper one left in its place; great part of the bed clothes were also removed, and she was kept several days in a room without any fire; by this means the heat was so abated, that she gradually got over all dislike to her new clothes, and on the fourth day put them on with great alacrity. She was then ordered some plain work to do, and on her refusal, had no breakfast given her till she complied; her sisters were strictly charged not to obey any of her commands, and to return no answer when he spoke imperiously: all these methods had very good effects, but I judged it best, in order to complete the cure, to send her to a distant part of the country to her aunt, whose husband had a cotton manufactory, in the superintendence of which this worthy lady and three very amiable and good daughters assisted him; here at a distance from all afflicted with the complaint, and in the society of those in full health, Miss Apeme speedily lost all traces of the disorder, and soon after returned home quite well; upon which a gentleman who had a great affection for her, renewed his addresses, which her illness had suspended, and she is now his wife and the mother of a lovely infant, and not a little thankful to her doctor, who has since attended her on very different occasions from the above.

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DOCTOR HEALERS.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

Having in our last number given to our readers a full detail of the management of the Philadelphia prison, and exhibited a comparative view of mild and sanguinary laws, and the good effects of the former, we now from the same author Robert J. Turnbull,

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